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Grafton Affordable Housing Trust

Grafton Memorial Municipal Center
30 Providence Road
Grafton, MA 01519

Minutes of Meeting

August 5, 2015

A meeting of the Grafton Affordable Housing Trust was held on Wednesday, August 5, 2015 in the Finance Committee Meeting Room of the Grafton Memorial Municipal Center.

Present: Vice Chair Deborah, Clerk Charles Pratt, and Members John Carlson & Dan Crossin. Staff present: Assistant Town Planner Ann Morgan.

Vice Chair Kochevar called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Action Items

- a. Reorganization – Ms. Kochevar noted that the Board of Selectmen did not reappoint Edward Prisby to the Trust. She proceeded to conduct the reorganization and some discussion ensued about who would run the meeting after voting. Motion to authorize Deborah Kochevar to conduct the business of the Trust throughout the whole meeting of 8/5/16 and to have the new Chairman assume full duties at the next meeting made by Mr. Carlson, seconded by Mr. Crossin. Motion passed unanimously.

The Trust discussed the need to fill membership vacancies with people who bring skill sets that can benefit the advancement of the Trust's mission. Mr. Carlson noted that some of the skills most helpful would be financial services (banking, investments, municipal finance), legal, real estate, etc. It was also noted that the Trust officers should have more defined roles with regards to managing the business of the Trust. Mr. Carlson suggested that the Chairman have strong leadership skills with regards to facilitating and would be expected to be the "face" of the Trust when dealing with the Town leadership. Ms. Kochevar further added that the Chairman should have strong networking skills and be responsible for overseeing the Trust's finances. Mr. Crossin noted that the potential for increased fiduciary responsibility is significant and that the Trust should have a Treasurer to work in close conjunction with the Chairman.

Motion to create an officer position of Treasurer to work in conjunction with the Chairman in overseeing the Trust's financial responsibilities and duties made by Mr. Pratt, seconded by Ms. Kochevar. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Motion to elect Deborah Kochevar as Chairman made by Mr. Pratt, seconded by Mr. Carlson. Motion passed 3-1 with Ms. Kochevar voting NAY. Ms. Kochevar declined the opportunity to serve as Chairman due to work and travel conflicts that prevents her from attending meetings on a regular basis.

Motion to elect John Carlson as Chairman made by Mr. Pratt, seconded by Ms. Kochevar. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Motion to elect Deborah Kochevar as Vice Chair made by Mr. Carlson, seconded by Mr. Crossin. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Motion to elect Charles Pratt as Clerk made by Mr. Carlson, seconded by Ms. Kochevar. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Motion to elect Dan Crossin as Treasurer made by Mr. Pratt, seconded by Ms. Kochevar. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

The Trust reviewed Section 7/9(f) of the Town Charter with regards to filling vacancies. Mr. Carlson noted that the Trust has had a number of vacancies over the years and that it was rare to have a full membership. He noted that Mr. Adams, a previous member of the Trust, has offered to serve for one year as a temporary measure to give the Trust more quorum opportunities.

Motion to authorize the Chairman to submit a letter requesting assistance from the Board of Selectmen in temporarily filling a vacancy in accordance with Section 7.9(f) of the Town Charter for the sake of conducting Trust business in a timely manner made by Mr. Carlson, seconded by Mr. Pratt. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

- b. Recommendation to the Board of Selectmen – 16 Tulip Circle – Motion to recommend to Selectmen that they exercise right of first refusal and require monitoring agent to assist the buyer in locating a qualified affordable buyer made by Mr. Pratt, seconded by Mr. Crossin, Motion passed unanimously. Staff was directed to draft and submit a memo to the Selectmen stating the Trust's recommendation.
- c. Recommendation to the Board of Selectmen – 60 Flint Pond Drive – Motion to recommend to Selectmen that they exercise right of first refusal and require monitoring agent to assist the buyer in locating a qualified affordable buyer made by Mr. Pratt, seconded by Mr. Crossin, Motion passed unanimously. Staff was directed to draft and submit a memo to the Selectmen stating the Trust's recommendation..
- d. Open Session Meeting Minutes – tabled to next meeting

2. New Business

- a. Vacancies – Assistant Town Administrator, Doug Willardson, was present to discuss this agenda item. He reviewed proposed by-law revisions for potential warrant article drafted by the Town Administrator's office regarding the restructuring of Trust. After review of the draft language the Trust outlined its position as follows:
 - Unanimously supported expanding membership to 7 and that one be a member of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Willardson noted that the Selectmen intend to appoint one of their members to the Trust at their 8/18/15 meeting.
 - Unanimously opposed the proposal that the Town Administrator or their designee be appointed as a member of the Trust. Recommended that the language be revised to reflect the Town Administrator or designee serve ex officio as is stated in the Town Charter. It was noted that only Grafton residents can serve in elected or appointed positions and while the current Town Administrator is a resident there's no guarantee that future Town Administrator or their designees would be.
 - Noted that the warrant language would have to be expanded to include two actions: revise the Affordable Housing Trust General By-law language and revise Declaration

of Trust language. Changes to the Declaration of Trust will need to be filed with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds.

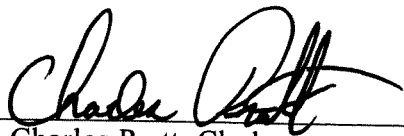
- b. The Town Administrator has proposed a revision to Chapter 4, Paragraph 4 Article 35 of the Town By-laws to add language "but not enter into litigation." This change would prohibit the Trust from entering into any litigation. Trust voted unanimously to reject the proposed change noting it was in conflict with state law and other factors including the fact that Trust is not a subsidiary organization under either the Town Administrator or the Board of Selectmen.
- c. Meeting Schedule – Motion to change the to change the meeting schedule to the second and fourth Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. made by Mr. Carlson, seconded by Mr. Pratt. Motion passed unanimously. Staff was directed to prepare and distribute a new meeting schedule and arrange for meeting space.
- d. Correspondence regarding attorney fees – Questions were raised about whether or not the issue should be reviewed in Executive Session. Mr. Willardson stated that he would review the material with Town Counsel and forward a determination. The item was tabled to the next meeting and the Trust agreed that the material should be considered confidential until a determination is made.

3. Old Business

- a. Financials – The Trust reviewed account balances from the Town Accountant. Mr. Crossin noted that he will meet with Accountant to review the report. A standardized Treasurer's report will be developed and presented at each meeting. Treasurer report to be standing agenda item going forward.
- b. JM Goldson Contract – revised contract needed to reference the attached terms and conditions. Trust members will come to office to sign when ready.
- c. 23 Prentice Street – Reschedule Site Visit – scheduled to August 27th at 6:00 p.m.
- d. Fisherville Mill Site – Schedule Site Visit – staff to coordinate with Gene Bernat for a fall visit.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Mr. Carlson, seconded by Mr. Pratt. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Charles Pratt, Clerk